

In the Claims:

Please amend claims 19 and 27-30, as follows:

1-18. (Cancelled)

19. (Currently amended) A magnetic head comprising:

a slider having a rail with a top surface extending in a longitudinal direction thereof;

a thin-film element part to write and read information, formed on an end of said rail top surface of said slider along the longitudinal direction; and

a protective film formed on said thin-film element part and defining a distal end of the rail along the longitudinal direction whereby air exits said slider at said distal end,

said protective film having a first ~~lateral~~ recess which extends in the longitudinal direction between ~~from~~ said thin-film element part ~~towards~~ and said distal end, ~~and a second transverse recess generally perpendicular to said first lateral recess which extends from said thin-film element part toward said distal end, said second~~ first recess being lower than said rail top surface and having a width defined by a width of said rail.

20-21. (Cancelled)

22. (Previously presented) A magnetic disk apparatus comprising:  
a head supporting part to carry a magnetic head claimed in claim 19, to write  
and read information by enabling said head to float over a recording medium;  
an arm part on which said head supporting part is provided; and  
a driving part to move said arm part over said recording medium.

23-26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently amended) The magnetic head as claimed in claim 19,  
wherein said ~~second~~first recess has a top surface substantially parallel to said rail top surface.

28. (Withdrawn -- Currently amended) The magnetic head as claimed in  
claim 19, wherein said ~~second~~first recess has a tapered top surface.

29. (Withdrawn -- Currently amended) The magnetic head as claimed in  
claim 19, wherein said ~~second~~first recess has a curved top surface.

30. (Currently amended) A magnetic head comprising:  
a slider having a rail with a top surface extending in a longitudinal direction  
thereof, said rail formed on a surface of said slider;

a thin-film element part to write and read information, formed on an end of said rail top surface of said slider along the longitudinal direction; and

a protective film formed on said thin-film element part and defining a distal end of the rail along the longitudinal direction whereby air exits said slider at said distal end,

said protective film having a recess which extends in the longitudinal direction ~~from~~between said thin-film element part ~~towards~~and said distal end,

said recess being lower than said rail top surface and having a width equal to a width of said rail.

31. (New) The magnetic head as claimed in claim 19, wherein said protective film further has a second recess which extends from said thin-film element part in a direction generally perpendicular to the longitudinal direction.

32. (New) The magnetic head as claimed in claim 31, wherein said second recess has a top surface which is substantially parallel to said rail top surface and is lower than the first recess.